

Brafferton Hall  
William & Mary College  
Williamsburg  
Virginia

HABS No. VA-346

HABS  
VA  
48-Wil,  
4D-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORIC AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
District of Virginia

ADDENDUM: PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD

Historic American Buildings Survey

Prepared at Washington Office

1.  
HABS  
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BRAFFERTON HALL (ALSO PRESIDENT HOUSE)

Owner: William & Mary College

Date of erection: C. 1724 (Pres. House 1732)

Present Condition: Good, restored.

Description:

Brick, Flemish bond; ~~and~~ headers of glazed brick, grey and green in color. Roof high hipped, with a pair of ridge chimneys. Front five bays, center door. Lower sash 16/16 upper, 12/16. Door two leaf, with transom over, below a pediment. Side elevation, two bays. New dormers front and rear, one on each side.

Add Data: Built as an Indian School by the Brafferton Estate of England. During the Civil War all the interiors were destroyed except the stair. These were restored C. 1932. (President's House) Built as residence for the President in 1732; description of the laying of the first brick being extant. The building was damaged by fire while occupied by the French forces in 1781 and is said to have been restored at the King's expense. The sash and exterior trim is very old, but that of the interior is largely restored. This building balances Brafferton Hall across the campus of the college.

2.  
VA  
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BRAFFERTON HALL  
Williamsburg, James City County, Virginia

Owner: William and Mary College

Date of erection: 1723

Builder: Probably Henry Cary

Present condition: Good, restored

Description:

The Brafferton was built as one of the forecourt buildings of the College and forms the south pendant, facing the President's House to the north. The latter was built in 1732 and had been little altered, except for interior changes, when restoration was undertaken c. 1931-2. The Brafferton, however, had lost its original sash and doorways. All of its interior finish was removed during the Civil War.

The building is of brick, laid in Flemish bond with glazed headers. It is two full stories with a high hipped roof. At the break of the hip is a pair of chimneys. The north and south fronts are identical, five bays wide with center doors. The lower sash are sixteen-over-sixteen lights and the upper twelve-over-sixteen. The three dormers on the roof have twelve-over-eight-light sash. The side elevations are two bays, with a single dormer on the roof. The exterior woodwork is all new, on the old lines. The doorways have high transoms with wood pediments fixed above the openings. These are restored from an original above the north door of the President's House. The south steps to the Brafferton remained, at least in part, under the modern porch and were of particularly interesting construction. They were semicircular in plan, with the treads and risers of separate pieces of bluestone, the tread having a half-round moulded edge. This is the only step of its type known to the writer. The interior woodwork is all modern in the style of the original period.

Additional data:

The Brafferton Building was built in 1723, possibly under the direction of Henry Cary, Jr., to house the first permanent Indian school in the colonies. By 1712 twenty Indians were assembled in the school established on the income from part of a £4,000 fund left for "pious and charitable" uses by Robert Boyle, English scientist and seventh son of the Earl of Cork. Governor Spotswood's Indian School was moved here from Fort Christanna about 1722. The

building was named after the English manor in which the fund was invested. Never very successful, the school was closed when the Revolution began, and the income was diverted to the West Indies for Negro education.

Reference: Virginia Guide, p. 318.

Author: Thomas I. Waterman

Date: May 26, 1941